

## Social Media Policy

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### 1. PURPOSE

This Policy establishes the principles for the use of social media at EPA. For purposes of this Policy, the term “social media” refers to the sharing of information through virtual networks and communities.

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### 2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to EPA employees, contractors, and other personnel who are authorized to use social media on behalf of EPA.

This Policy **does not** apply to EPA employees using social media tools for personal use while using government-owned office equipment; such use is covered by the EPA CIO 2101.2, “[Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment Policy](#).”

This Policy **does not** apply to EPA employees using social media in their personal capacities; however, employees are always required to follow the [Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch](#) and the [Hatch Act](#).

This Policy does not supersede or replace existing legal responsibilities and policies in effect.

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### 3. AUDIENCE

The audience for this Policy includes any EPA employee or contractor (under direct supervision of an EPA employee), or other person who is authorized to use social media on behalf of EPA.

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### 4. AUTHORITY

White House Memorandum, “[Transparency and Open Government](#),” January 21, 2009.

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum, M-10-06, “[Open Government Directive](#),” December 8, 2009.

OMB Memorandum, M-10-23, “[Guidance for Agency use of Third-party Websites and Applications \(pdf\)](#),” June 25, 2010.

Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs and OMB Memorandum “[Social Media, Web-Based Interactive Technologies, and the Paperwork Reduction Act \(pdf\)](#),” April 7, 2010.

EPA Memorandum, “[Transparency in EPA’s Operations](#),” April 23, 2009.

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[US EPA Information Access Strategy \(pdf\)](#), January 2009.

[US EPA Public Involvement Policy \(pdf\)](#), May 2003.

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## 5. POLICY

It is EPA's policy to use social media where and when appropriate to meet its mission of protecting human health and the environment.

Agency product review processes in place for regional and program offices apply to EPA's use of social media.

EPA will only use third-party sites that have been approved for Agency use, and such use must be in accordance with approved [Terms of Service \(TOS\) agreements](#).

EPA will not use third-party social media sites to collect personally identifiable information.

EPA must comply with applicable federal laws, regulations, and requirements including, but not limited to records management, Section 508 access for persons with disabilities, privacy, and information security in its social media use.

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## 6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Chief Information Officer/Deputy Assistant Administrator** of the Office of Mission Support, and the **Associate Administrator** of the Office of Public Affairs are jointly responsible for monitoring compliance with this Policy.

**Office of Mission Support (OMS)** applies the requirements of this policy in its functions of providing appropriate agencywide web technology services and security, policy, guidance, and technical assistance to Program and Regional offices.

**Office of Public Affairs (OPA)** applies the requirements of this Policy in its functions of managing communications and product review. OPA also collaborates with the Office of General Counsel (OGC) to establish Terms of Service agreements with third-party sites in consultation with OMS. OPA develops and posts social media guidance and tools in conjunction with OMS.

**Office of General Counsel (OGC)** provides legal guidance relating to the web, reviews and approves terms of service, and oversees ethics requirements for EPA employees.

**Office of Policy (OP)** - applies the requirements of this policy in its function of setting agencywide standards and guidance for the rulemaking process and coordinating EPA rulemakings.

**Office of the Inspector General (OIG)** will adhere to the Social Media Policy to the extent that it is not inconsistent with the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, or with the policies, procedures, and guidelines established by the Office of Inspector General.

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*Issued by the EPA Chief Information Officer,  
Pursuant to Delegation 1-19*

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**Senior Information Officials (SIOs)** serve as the primary point of accountability for the effective oversight, coordination, and management of information and information technology (IT) within their respective organizations and are responsible for ensuring that their office is in compliance with EPA's Social Media Policy, procedures and supporting documents.

**Information Management Officers (IMOs)** support their respective SIO in implementing the SIO's information technology and information management functions and responsibilities.

**Communication Directors** in program offices are responsible for managing communications from their organizations, including web efforts. [View a list of Communication Directors.](#)

**Public Affairs Directors** at Regional Offices are responsible for managing communications from their organizations, including web efforts. [View a list of Public Affairs Directors.](#)

**Social Media Leads** are responsible for working with their respective regional and program offices to discuss appropriate social media usage for that office in accordance with OPA and OMS web policy and web practices.

**Agency Privacy Officers** are National Program Managers for the agency's National Privacy Program. Develops agency level privacy policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines; leads Agency efforts to protect PII; provides direction and oversight of the agency's privacy responsibilities; reports to the Senior Agency Official for Privacy and the Office of Management and Budget on privacy compliance and administration activities.

**Information Security Officers (ISOs)** are designated by the Assistant Administrator (AA), Regional Administrator (RA), Inspector General (IG), or General Counsel for their respective organizations. The ISOs ensure that information resources under their purview are managed and protected appropriately. The primary role for ISOs is to ascertain that a current information security program is in place for their respective organization and that the information is properly managed from an information security perspective.

**Records Liaison Officers (RLOs)** are responsible for overseeing a records management program in a headquarters or field office in cooperation with the agency Records Management Officer.

**Regional and Program Offices** provide quality content and appropriate infrastructure and resources to communicate the Agency's work and mission on the web. Regional and program offices may provide additional procedures and guidance as needed to meet their respective priorities, provided they do not conflict with those that apply to the Agency as a whole. Ultimate accountability for region and program areas on the web is at the most senior level, typically at the Assistant Administrator or Regional Administrator level.

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## 7. RELATED INFORMATION

[Information Technology Management Reform Act of 1996](#) (absorbed under Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996) (40 U.S.C. § 1401).

[Records Management by Federal Agencies](#) (44 U.S.C. Chapter 31).

[Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act](#) (29 U.S.C. § 794(d)), as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-220), August 7, 1998.

[Privacy Act of 1974](#) - Records maintained on individuals (5 U.S.C. § 552(a)).

[Paperwork Reduction Act \(PRA\) of 1980, as amended](#); Paperwork Reduction Reauthorization Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

CIO 2101.2, "[Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment Policy](#)," 08/10/2020.

CIO Policy 2180.2 "[Web Governance and Management](#)".

CIO Policy 2130.4 "[Section 508 Policy](#)," 03/05/2024.

CIO Policy 2150.6 "[Information Security Policy](#)," 02/01/2024.

CIO Policy 2151.1 "[Privacy Policy](#)," 09/14/2015.

CIO Policy 2155.5 "[Records Management Policy](#)," 08/17/2021.

CIO Policy 2182.1, "[Children's Privacy and Children's Copyright Policy](#)," 02/22/2018.

CIO Policy 2181.1, "[Posting Copyrighted Works on EPA Website](#)," 2/22/2023.

CIO Policy 2171.0, "[Information Access Policy](#)," 01/24/2008.

CIO 2134.0, "[Information Collection Policy](#)," 01/05/2010.

CIO 2184.1-P-02.2, "[Using Social Media to Communicate with the Public Procedure](#)".

CIO 2184.1-P-03.2, "[Representing EPA Online Using Social Media Procedure \(pdf\)](#)".

[Social Media Ethics FAQs](#) found in the Social Media Resources section of the EPA Web Guide.

[EPA Comment Guidance](#) found in the Social Media Resources section of the EPA Web Guide.

[Interacting with EPA Online](#) disclaimer found in the Policies and Procedures section of the EPA Web Guide.

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Procedures and processes for creating, customizing, and maintaining EPA products using social media are found in the [Policies and Procedures section of the EPA Web Guide](#).

Requirements for creating, customizing, and maintaining web products on the Agency's Public Access and Intranet servers are found in [EPA's Web Guide](#), including all design requirements for public access EPA webpages in [EPA's Web Style Guide](#).

[Terms of Service agreements](#) can be found on the EPA Web Guide.

[Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch \(pdf\)](#), 5 C.F.R. Part 2635,

Current [EPA Information Directives](#) – CIO Policies, Procedures, Standards, and Guidance.

[Checklist of Requirements for Federal Websites and Digital Services](#).

[OGE LA-23-03: The Standards of Conduct and 18 U.S.C. § 208 as Applied to Official Social Media Use](#) (January 2023)

[Guidelines for Secure Use of Social Media by Federal Departments and Agencies](#) (September 2009)

[OMB Memorandum M-13-10: Antideficiency Act Implications of Certain Online Terms of Service Agreements](#) (April 2013)

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## 8. DEFINITIONS

**Social Media** - any online tool or application that allows the sharing of information through virtual networks and communities.

**Third-party website** - for purposes of this policy, any website that is not owned, operated or cosponsored by EPA. Refers to sites as a whole; EPA accounts on such sites are still third-party, even though EPA controls the content of those accounts.

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## 9. WAIVERS

There are no waivers from this Policy.

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## 10. DIRECTIVE(S) SUPERSEDED

CIO 2184.1, Social Media Policy, 07/05/2023.

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**11. CONTACTS**

For further information about this policy, please contact the Office of Web Communications in the Office of Public Affairs.

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***Vaughn Noga, Chief Information Officer and Deputy Assistant Administrator  
for Information Technology and Information Management***